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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6682  
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 4175  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 7094  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 9216  
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI PRIORITY 3515  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
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SUBJECT: SURAYUD DOWN IN THE DUMPS

Classified By: Ambassador Ralph L. Boyce. Reason 1.4 (a and d)

¶1. (C) During a telephone conversation on May 4, PM Surayud replied to the Ambassador's question of "how are you doing" by saying "you should pity me." While the PM did not explain the reasons for his low spirits, the Ambassador noted that the PM was not well-served by his ministers. Surayud agreed with this assessment.

¶2. (C) The reason for the call was to explain to Surayud the reasons behind Thailand's elevation to Priority Watch List (PWL) status under USTR's Special 301 process. The Ambassador explained that while compulsory licensing was a contributor to the new designation, long-standing and decreasing protection of intellectual property in general had been the major impetus for the enhanced designation. The PM did not argue the point and was pleased that the USG and his Ministry of Commerce would work together on a plan that would set targets for improving Thailand's record of protecting IP and hopefully remove Thailand from PWL next year.

¶3. (C) Comment: For a man proud of his asceticism who joined the Buddhist monkhood for a time following his retirement from the Army, to complain about his situation indicates the depths of his unhappiness. Surayud has long been a high-achiever and recipient of plentiful praise from his colleagues and superiors. Since becoming PM, he has been repeatedly accused of being a failure as Prime Minister; a group of underperforming, competing ministers have failed to accomplish much and been a source of embarrassment; and a group of generals constantly peer over his shoulder looking to criticize. These are all factors which have clearly taken a toll on Surayud's spirit. Surayud has many times said that he would gladly quit his post except for his duty to see the job through to the planned elections in December. We believe him.

BOYCE